# THEOLOGY

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## Constitutional Episcopacy

THE peril to individual freedom in the political sphere (economic freedom being still something to be achieved for the great mass of mankind) ever grows with the increasing scope of government and administration, and will continue to grow with the almost inevitable movement towards collectivist planning. It is clear that democracy can survive the peril only if the Christian doctrine of man prevails and is vitally expressed in common life and its institutions. In other words, the Church must provide the sphere where the synthesis between the individual and society is worked out in community in closest contact with the source of human freedom—God Himself.

Against the growing strength of authoritarianism the existence of vigorous autonomous groups is the greatest safeguard; and, from one point of view, the Church is the greatest of all voluntary groups. To say that is in no way to belittle the truth that the Church is not made by man's will nor constituted by his choice. But as an institution it is a voluntary group, a community with its own life and ordering, partly within the state, partly transcending it. Indeed, that the Church transcends national barriers is one of the most important facts for the hope of a new world.

But the life of the whole depends on the vigour of the parts, and it is this fact that makes one question whether, in the home Church, the diocese is fulfilling its true function. Historically the diocese is the Catholic unit of the Church's life and should, therefore, have a vigorous life of its own, manifesting on a wider scale than the parish the Christian elements of order and freedom in fellowship.

For, whereas in its political structure the state has through County Councils set up a constitutional organ between the central government and the village, the diocese, which roughly corresponds to the county, has remained feudal in organization. We have our Convocations and Assembly on the one hand and parochial church councils on the other, but the Diocesan Conference is a simulacrum. According to the best legal authority available it is a purely advisory body—*i.e.*, it has no constitutional rights or powers with the exception of being an electoral college for election to the Assembly. This inevitably gives the Diocesan Conference a quality of unreality and robs its members of enthusiasm. One large consequence is that we have in English Church life an anomaly so commonly accepted that it fails to be recognized as such! The Churchman, whether clerk or layman, finds the organ of his expression not in the ordered life of the community but in the "religious" press. And there it is apt to be both irresponsible and ineffective.[1]

[1] *Cf.* Jenkins, *The Nature of Catholicity*, p. 114.

Furthermore, the lack of a strong diocesan life strengthens the evils of parochialism. The one vital connexion of the parish with the diocese, apart from an occasional visit from the Bishop, is the furnishing of a financial quota over the expenditure of which it has little effective control. The parochial clergy form an aggregate rather than a community, and when they meet together it tends to be in like-minded groups rather than in the more bracing atmosphere of challenging differences. And it cannot be expected to be otherwise while as a body they possess no power over the general life of the Church and important decisions affecting them are passed over their heads by central bodies that appear hopelessly remote. And this lack of power creates a sense of impotence and frustration that is spiritually deadening and debilitating.

This state of affairs is particularly disastrous in days when, especially in our cities, the great human lack is a sense of community. The atomization of society has gone so far, and the search for a new basis of community is so baffling, that for the Church, which has such a basis, to neglect its opportunities is tragical. For it is just here that the Church should give a lead to civil society.

These, and other considerations to be mentioned later, suggest that the time has come for the revival of synodical government in the English dioceses. As long ago as 1930 the Lambeth Conference said: "We hold that the episcopate should be 'constitutional' in the sense that provision should be made for the due co-operation of the presbyterate and the congregation of Christ's faithful people in the ordering of the Church's life. Indeed, this is already secured in varying degrees in all parts of the Anglican Communion by the revival of Diocesan and Provincial Synods, or by other similar means." Why has no action been taken by the home Church?

Several reasons may account for this. Clergy in England, not having had experience of a share in diocesan government, tend by inertia to acquiesce in a tradition that it will not be easy to change. Many of us with overseas experience find it hard to share such acquiescence. We have known something of the solidarity and the fellowship of diocesan life, and we feel keenly the lack of it at home.

Secondly, some fear that the setting up of synods would awake slumbering party feeling and controversy and also give opportunity for wire-pulling and intrigue. If such be the character of the clergy and laity, no spiritual good is served by their subterranean suppression, while it might be hoped that their coming into the open might lead to their cure!

Thirdly, it is felt in some quarters that synods including the laity would give the laity undue influence in questions of doctrine. This is, of course, no new problem in the Church overseas, and there is no reason why the usual safeguards should not find a place in the constitutions of English dioceses. It is sometimes difficult to resist the suspicion that there are those who believe that England has nothing to learn from abroad.

Then there are difficulties of a more practical nature. Will not unseemly complications be caused by the problem of the distribution

of power between the Bishop and his synod? Overseas experience suggests that when the constitution of a diocese has been worked out these difficulties tend to fall into place and admit of a not too difficult solution.

Much more important is the problem raised by the size of perhaps most English dioceses. There is the plain fact that a synod consisting of all the clergy, and of lay representatives on the present scale of Diocesan Conferences, would mean a body so large and unwieldy as to be unworkable. A simple remedy, lacking precedent it is true, would be to use the principle of elective representation for the House of Clergy. The Ruridecanal Chapter would form the obvious electoral college. Precedent need not have the last word in unprecedented times.

But whatever the practical difficulties they must be weighed against the important bearing of the question on the problem of reunion. Doubtless, here, the theological issues are primary, but they should not be complicated and confused by difficulties of practice capable of adjustment.

It may be that the constitutional episcopate is a desirable, even necessary, preliminary to the Church of England obtaining, with wide consent, her spiritual freedom from Parliament, itself a preliminary to reunion.[1] But apart from that it is obvious that the Free Churches will not, precisely because their recognition of the rights of the local clergy and laity constitutes one of their greatest contributions to the Church as a whole, be prepared to consider reunion with us so long as we retain the feudal form of episcopacy. Whatever criticisms may be levelled at the South India Scheme or the "Outline of a Reunion Scheme," they at least make this plain. Synodical government is prepared for or assumed. Mr Douglas in his *Constitutional Episcopacy* makes out a strong case for the thesis that it was this rather than any doctrinal question that prevented Presbyterians and Anglicans from coming together in the seventeenth century.[2] The clinging to episcopal autocracy remains to-day a definite bar to reunion; the burden of the Free Church objection is still not to episcopacy as such but to that form of it historically known as prelacy.

Here no doctrinal question is involved (except, perhaps, in ultramontane circles), no abandonment of Catholic principle required (rather its restoration), only the correction of an administrative form that is a relic of the feudal system. It is hard to believe that the Church at home really cares for unity when no steps are taken to remove an obstacle whose removal could offend no man's conscience and yet be a contribution to peace.

Agitation for this reform has long been carried on by individuals and groups with little prospect of success. But now that events are forcing on us reforms that should have been tackled long ago there should be a chance of a more favourable hearing.

We would plead that, for the sake of the preservation of individual

[1] *Vide* Jenkins, *The Nature of Catholicity*, p. 159.
[2] *Cf.* Jenkins, *op. cit.*, p. 109; Ramsey, *The Gospel and the Catholic Church*, p. 218.

freedom in society, for the invigoration of the common life of the Church, and for the sake of reunion, our Bishops, with whom must rest the initiative, will include the restoration of diocesan synods, the creation of a constitutional episcopate, in their program of reform.

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## Calvin and Tradition

Readers of *Christian Doctrine*, by Dr J. S. Whale, will have seen the appended note to chapter vi in which he utters certain very severe strictures on the verdict pronounced on Calvin by Dr G. L. Prestige in *Fathers and Heretics*, to the effect that Calvin represents a complete breach with historic Christendom in both devotion and doctrine. This brief article is inspired by the conviction that Prestige is right, and that in his handling of his retort Dr Whale is guilty of real error both in principle and in regard to the facts themselves.

To turn now to Whale's claims, we have first the statement that "Calvin's massive theological and ecclesiological system is not a clean breach with historic Christendom, but a structure resting on Holy Scripture and ancient ecclesiastical usage." Now in my reading of Calvin himself and expositions of Calvin, the one thing I have grasped above all others, and the thing underlying all others, is the irrefutable fact that Calvin's great foundation is Scripture and that alone, interpreted by the divinely given aid of the testimony of the Holy Spirit. The full force of Calvin's views on this matter can be gauged by a reading of the Institutes, chaps i to xi, in which Calvin is clearing the decks for his main tasks. Those who want a brilliant and careful exposition of this fundamental of Calvinism will find it in the first part of Dr B. B. Warfield's *Calvin and Calvinism*, the work of Calvin's greatest English-speaking expositor. For Calvin there is one sole though double-sided basis of authority, and that is Holy Scripture interpreted through the testimony of the Holy Spirit. To separate these two is for Calvin impossible, and to seek to understand Calvin as though either Holy Scripture alone, interpreted by anyone, or the inspiration of the Holy Spirit alone and apart from the once-given written Word, were sufficient is to ask for trouble. Only the elect can understand Scripture and profit by it, and the elect will seek no other source of authority. Calvin will have nothing to do with the "illuminati" and would have agreed with Luther that the "enthusiasts" were "ingenious and Scriptureless heads." What Dr Warfield calls "the Puritan principle par excellence" rests on this foundation, and it is absolutely basic for Calvin. All legitimate worship, Church order, and all else must be tested by its conformity to Divine Law, and that Law is delivered in Scripture alone. In this connexion a notable chapter is Bk I, vii, where Calvin deals with the relative authority of Scripture as against the Church, and Bk I, ix, where he is dealing with images and their use in Christian churches. The Second Commandment is for him entirely decisive, and

the usages of centuries of Christian worship he dismisses. Still more revealing and important is Bk IV, ix, on the subject of the authority of general councils as entirely merely confirmatory of Scripture's Law. These are important references; many more might be added. These do, however, suffice, so the point need not be laboured. For reasons such as these, therefore, it did seem to me to be subtly misleading of Whale to try to squeeze in the words "*and* ancient ecclesiastical usage" as though there were here a kind of second pillar of support for the Calvinist structure. To write of Calvin's championship of such usage as " well known" is to forget his real basis and ignore page after page of very violent polemic against those very usages.[1]

Such very limited attachment as Calvin retains is in one sense the most deceptive thing about his work and his entire thought. Nowhere is it frankly attachment to the tradition for its own intrinsic merit's sake. Everywhere it is based upon a real or imagined basis in Holy Scripture. There are times when Calvin gives the impression of being really uncomfortable with a usage or a belief, while yet holding on to it against his own logic. I think this is patently true of his views on Infant Baptism. Reading his preparatory words on Sacraments in general I found myself wondering how on earth he was going to face this issue. When I came to it and found a wearisome, though thorough, parallel drawn between Baptism and Circumcision I became convinced of Calvin's failure. It was no surprise, therefore, to read Dr Dakin's verdict to the effect that it looks as if Calvin here has replaced his true doctrine of Regeneration by a qualification based on birth from Christian parents. A similar verdict might be claimed in regard to his Eucharistic teaching, for while rejecting with equal violence of language the Roman and Lutheran views respectively, Calvin is not free from the medieval cast of mind on which both rest. Finally, in his conception of the ministry Calvin has no sort of hesitation in abandoning ancient Catholic Order. There is something in the living Church tradition which Calvin has not understood, and these words of Canon A. M. Ramsey in *The Gospel and the Catholic Church* do surely fairly judge of Calvinism. He writes: "Calvinism is second to no form of Christianity in its emphasis on order and discipline. It misses, however, a great deal of the inner spirit of Churchmanship. While Luther ignores outward order, he has a warm sense of the Church's mystical meaning in his view of Christ and the Christians. 'Ye are the Body' rings through his writings. For Calvin, however, the Church is rather utilitarian. It is not perceived as the glow of Christ's Incarnate presence; it is the policeman sent to protect the Christian life by commands and prohibitions. Here is discipline, without the sense of union with the death and life of Christ which gives discipline its meaning; here is order, without the sense of the wondrous historical and apostolic race which gives order its meaning. Yet both Luther and Calvin bid the

[1] See vol. i, pp. 90 *ff.* and pp. 314 *ff.*, where Calvin is expounding the Decalogue; also vol. ii, pp. 327 *ff.*, where a new ministry is devised; pp. 413 *ff.*, where certain customs of the medieval Church are treated; pp. 472 *ff.*, where he holds forth against vows of every kind and the Religious Life; pp. 622 *ff.*, where the Five Lesser Sacraments are whittled away.

Christian historian bow his head in thankfulness for the Gospel revived, and for the Church revived also, before he can dare speak of the incompleteness of their work."

Finally, great show is made by Whale of Calvin's habit of quotation from the Fathers, but here above everywhere else he has laid himself open to criticism, for there are clear errors of fact which I have been at pains to verify. "He appeals," writes Whale, "constantly to Augustine and Chrysostom; to Cyprian, Jerome and Gregory." But what are the facts? As far as the Institutes is concerned, overwhelmingly, of course, the appeal is to Augustine, who is laid under contribution 230 times. Now, knowing the distinctive nature of Calvinism, we can well understand why this large place is given to Augustine. It is not for me to discuss here the matter of Augustinianism and Calvinism; I will only say that I think they are different. Indeed Calvin at times deliberately goes beyond and corrects Augustine. There is another side to Augustine of which Calvin disapproves, and we can hardly use entirely the fact of this large use of this Father to establish the other's respect for tradition. In regard to the others named by Whale, Chrysostom is used 27 times, Cyprian 14 times, Jerome 12 times, and Gregory 39 times. The last named mainly provides Calvin with bullets to fire at a sinful Church, which is natural enough seeing that Gregory is above all else a reformer, moralist and reorganizer. Figures of quotations such as these hardly justify Whale's adverb "constantly" in a work which in the Beveridge version extends to 1,100 pages. Still less does the selective habit of Calvin in quotation show anything of that attachment to tradition of which Whale tries to make so much. Always these Fathers are used as witnesses, and very minor witnesses, to opinions far more thoroughly held and expressed by Augustine and Calvin himself on questions like Grace, Free-Will, and Merit. If the Fathers had differed from Calvin he would have either paraded them for ridicule or ignored them altogether.

The case of St Bernard is made so much of by Whale that it calls for special treatment. The statement that Bernard is quoted most often next to Augustine in the Institutes is not true. Bernard is quoted 21 times and at least once there is duplication. It is true that Calvin uses the Sermons on the Canticles and not *De Consideratione* where the vices of medieval Catholicism are lashed, but even this is quite misleading. Not a single one of the quotations is concerned with that sweet and distinctively Bernardine piety and devoted love for our Lord which is underlined in the last chapter of *Fathers and Heretics*. Once again it is as a very minor witness for Calvinism that Bernard is called upon. There is another Bernard as there is another and Catholic Augustine, and both are strangers to Calvin. It is then rather unfair of Whale to write thus of Calvin's use of Bernard's sermons. One might imagine that Calvin transmits their message and spirit, whereas the truth is that it is difficult to imagine two men more different. It does seem, all considered, that Prestige had good enough reasons for what he wrote.

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# A Forgotten Frontier

STUDENTS of mural decoration may obtain interest and instruction from a study of the walls of our better-equipped A.R.P. posts. There they will find a number of maps in varying stages of decay—the Maginot Line, Scandinavia, Greece, the Far East, Africa, the U.S.S.R., and so on. This rapid shifting of interest, so that towns which we could neither pronounce nor spell one week become household words the next, recalls the movements of theological debate during recent years. Even during my relatively limited "theological consciousness" the centre of debate has moved several times. Away back in the late 1920's we were still engaged in the last stages of the Science and Religion campaign—a campaign which had been going on, if our records are true, since the middle of the nineteenth century. But after 1930 the centre of activity, at any rate in academic circles, shifted to ethics and especially to social ethics; the key book-title of the time was "The *Relevance* of Christianity." More recently the scene has changed again. Interest in *belief* has returned, but this time in the doctrinal content of the Faith rather than in its reasonableness; we ask, "What is the Faith?" not, "How much may we believe?" It is well to look back sometimes at our old battlefields and to ask whether they are dead or are merely enjoying a "lull." If I read the signs aright we are about to see a vigorous reopening of the science front, but (to drop the military metaphor) the terms of the debate will be quite different from those of twenty or more years ago. Admittedly, among ordinary folk the old questions about evolution, miracles, and the existence of God are still being asked. Yet these paths of thought are fairly well worn; what is needed there is sound pastoral teaching rather than original thinking. The area where fresh thought and debate are called for—or will be forced upon us—is the borderland between scientific method, morality, and the working of society.

The period from 1930-42 has given us all a new awareness of social forces. While theologians (or some of them!) have been learning from Niebuhr, Tillich and Berdyaev, scientists have been listening to Bernal, Crowther and Haldane. Scientific thought and activity is no longer seen mainly or entirely as intellectual but as a social product, shaped by and itself shaping society. Many scientists to-day are profoundly influenced by Marxist and near-Marxist thinking, and see this as intimately related to their scientific thought and work. For evidence of this change it is sufficient to turn to the recent report of the British Association,[1] or to listen to the debates of the professional societies and associations of scientists—including the most staid and conservative of them.

More significant still is the movement of opinion which is going on among ordinary people. There is a profound and an increasing belief in the power of science, not merely as a technique but as a social directive; folk recognize that science (like religion) may be misused by the forces of society, but they see in the scientific method something

[1] *Science and World Order*. British Association. 5s.

which may be a solvent for our social ills. A very great many men and women in the R.A.F., in the technical branches of the army and navy and in our factories, are having a closer contact with scientific and technical affairs than they would normally have done. And these people will be the dominant group in society over the next decade. There is a tremendous demand for lectures and educational material on science, but not so much on technicalities as on scientific method and the significance of science; the evidence of voluntary bodies—the Y.M.C.A. and so on—doing educational work among the troops is unmistakable on this point. The large circulation of popular books on science—such books as *The Scientific Outlook* (Waddington), *Science and Everyday Life* (Haldane), *The Century of Science* (Taylor)—is equally symptomatic. These books present science not as a body of opinions but as a moral *dynamic*. To say that it does not provide an adequate basis for a complete morality, while true, is beside the point. Waddington's book, for example, contains numberless loose ends and inconsistencies; very many of the statements in it are intellectually vulnerable. Yet it shows the scientific attitude as a moral and emotional fact which is real and recognizable to anyone who has experienced the quality of scientific debate. It is this fact with which we have to reckon. To discount it is like dismissing the Communist Movement because of some weaknesses in *Das Kapital*, or the Christian Faith because of contradictions between different books of the Bible.

The outlook on the theological side is not encouraging. A great many of our Christian writers and thinkers seem almost unaware of what is going on in the world around. The vital schools of theology (and I mean by that the orthodox schools, Catholic and Reformed, rather than the Liberals) are just not interested in scientific affairs, and maintain an attitude of cultured and dogmatic aloofness. Those who do refer to science do so without adequate equipment. Far too much Christian writing on this subject is content to demolish a few superficial assertions without ever "getting the feel" of the other side. Theologians and clergy are depressingly prone to adopt a "keep off the grass" attitude, implicitly chiding the scientist for daring to show his face in *their* preserves. This sight of parsons demolishing the moral pretensions of scientists by irrefutable arguments (and I believe that they are irrefutable), and no one, except a few good church-goers, taking the faintest notice, is too much like the efforts of rival producers to secure their markets and to maintain the extent of their respective monopolies! On the other hand, the vague and patronizing approval of science as "a good thing," and the use of ill-digested scraps of "science" to bolster pulpit assertions which occur in some Christian circles, are even worse; they merely confirm folk in their belief that Christianity is played out and that science replaces it.

How can this subject be reopened fruitfully? First, we can learn something from the good work which has been done by Christian thinkers in grappling sympathetically with Marxism and radical socialism. Such folk have been concerned not with refuting, but with "getting inside the skin" of, these movements. If the Science and Religion issue is to be reopened, it must be done by those who know

what the Christian Faith is in intellectual terms and who, at the same time, "know the feel" of scientific debate (who read *Nature*, take part in the discussion of learned societies and of scientific research).

Next, can we have a reopening of the Science and Religion discussion from the standpoint of religious orthodoxy? It is roughly true to say that the "Liberals" bore the heat of the old Science and Religion battle. The new upholders of orthodoxy, since they were not in the battle, seem almost oblivious of the whole subject. Yet such an attitude is dangerously ostrich-like in view of the present tide of public interest. "Modernism" may have had a weak grasp of historic Christianity and been over-anxious to come to terms with scientific thought; but that is no reason to react into doctrinaire gibes (for they are often little more) about "the failure of scientific humanism."

Finally, can we have an examination of the positive contribution of science to our moral and social thinking? Science may form an inadequate basis for a complete morality, and it is patently obvious to-day that it does not provide a solvent for all our social ills; yet it is a simple historical fact that the scientific outlook has yielded outstandingly good social and moral fruits well outside the limits of the applied sciences. Professor Whitehead has written: "The common sense of the eighteenth century, its grasp of the obvious facts of human suffering, and of the obvious demands of human nature, acted on the world like a bath of moral cleansing." Science has not merely told us *how* to relieve suffering (by improved knowledge of medicine, hygiene and so on); intertwined with it has been an attitude of mind which has recognized cruelty and oppression and social shams, and has exerted a disinfectant influence in our whole social life. The Church, in some periods of its history, has woefully lacked such disinfectant. Yet in Church circles there are frequent attempts to belittle the moral fruits of science, to dismiss it as "mere technicality." Such an attitude betrays invincible ignorance, or still worse, the mortal sin of "calling good evil" in the unconscious interest of ecclesiastical self-conceit. (Surely, Matt. xii, 24-31 is relevant here.)

These few notes are not an attempt at analysis but of introduction only. It is my conviction that unless the Church can improve the quality and range of its thinking on these points, its witness during the years immediately ahead will be seriously enfeebled.

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## Community and Reconstruction

It is generally agreed that the most difficult problem of post-war reconstruction will be the preservation of individual liberty within a society that, whether we like it or not, will be more and more a planned society. The days of unrestricted private enterprise are gone, and there are only a handful who desire them to return. But a planned society is going to be quite as disastrous in the long run if the individual is not to be allowed the freedom in which to experiment.

An increasing number of small groups have been attempting for some years past to provide an answer to this problem, and their answer is to be found in a valuable series of essays entitled *Community in a Changing World.*[1] The writers believe that citizenship cannot be realized within the chaos and disorder of nation states as at present constituted, and must therefore be worked out in small groups in which each individual is given the fullest possible scope for the development of all his qualities, and in which accordingly community is a realizable state.

How far this entails a deliberate abandonment of the world and separation from the rest of society would appear to rest upon the degree of pessimism with which these groups view the state of civilization. Mr Middleton Murry, for example, clearly conceives of these small groups as being economically independent of society at large and advocates subsistence production. There are a number of interesting sketches of community experiments, some almost entirely detached from society, others existing and even flourishing in the very centre of city life.

It is clear that the more frustrated man becomes by the complexity of mechanistic civilization, the more he will seek to find an answer to its contradiction of his nature by experiments in community-living. This book offers sufficient proof that this is the case. At the same time, it is clear that those who feel this need of creative society in miniature are by no means agreed either as to the basis of community or the methods of its attainment. Some of the experiments described are sheerly humanistic in basis, and there is a manifest cleavage of opinion on the issue of separation from society. Perhaps this is not altogether cause for dissatisfaction. So long as it remains possible to achieve a miniature community within society, it is good that some at least should make the attempt—the really crucial question is: "How long will it remain possible?" And one fears that at the moment when it becomes impossible, it will also be impossible to realize community outside society. If it is not clear that all the writers have recognized this truth, we should still be grateful for a thoroughly challenging series of essays. Amongst the writers are Mr Middleton Murry, Mr Max Plowman, Mr Wilfred Wellock, Dr George MacLeod and the Rev. J. Winslow.

Canon Baker has assembled together a distinguished array of apologists for a commentary on the Ten Peace Points of His Holiness the Pope, the Archbishops and the Moderator of the Free Church Federal Council. Nevertheless, *A Christian Basis for the Post-War World*[2] compares unfavourably, for all its scholarship, with Mr Ralph Fairway's lively little pamphlet, *The Fellowship of Fire.*[3] One fancies that Mr Fairway is more likely to persuade his readers of the necessity of a Christian basis for the post-war world than any amount of learned

[1] *Community in a Changing World.* 3s. 6d. Pub. by Community Service Committee, Chancton, Dartnell Park, West Byfleet, Surrey.

[2] *A Christian Basis for the Post-War World.* S.C.M. Press. 2s. 6d.

[3] *The Fellowship of Fire*, by Ralph Fairway. Pub. by the Stirling Tract Enterprise, Drummond Tract Depot, Stirling. 6d.

dissertations from Miss Dorothy Sayers, Dr A. D. Lindsay, Miss Margaret Bondfield, and the other distinguished contributors. It is perhaps inevitable that in any symposium there shall be a measure of contradictory statements. It is, however, unfortunate that Mr R. R. Stokes, M.P., says: "Any just peace must be agreed and not dictated" (p. 18); whereas Mr Sidney Dark later affirms: "My point is that, in the circumstances, the peace will be imposed. Its terms will be dictated and will have to be accepted by the conquered nations" (p. 48). Mr Dark is probably the realist, but it is questionable whether any purpose is served by postulating programs for a new world which, however desirable, do not take into consideration the realities of the situation as it is likely to be. Miss Letitia Fairfield's contribution on "Possessions" carefully avoids the issue of the economic system, and it is therefore something of a tribute to her ingenuity that one is able to find more wisdom in the ten pages allotted to her than in any other article. There is a useful bibliography and a number of worth-while questions for discussion. Mr Ralph Fairway, on the other hand, has no panacea to offer—he has a truly prophetic style, an engaging manner and a fund of appropriate illustrations. His theme is the Church as the Spirit-filled community. As one who has long been looking for the kind of literature that is readable to the ordinary man in the ordinary parish, I welcome this pamphlet unreservedly.

Lewis Maclachlan is the editor of *The Christian Pacifist*, a monthly inter-denominational journal which serves as a forum for the various pacifist organizations within the Church. A reviewer in that journal has naively suggested that Mr Maclachlan's *Faith of Friendship*[1] is "not concerned with pacifism or with any other nostrum for making a human Utopia" (p. 116, *The Christian Pacifist*, June, 1942). In some respects, however, Mr Maclachlan reveals the pacifist mentality in its most blatant form. I am reminded of an occasion not long ago when travelling in a train from London to Bristol with an army captain; a remark which he made stuck in my mind: "It must be so much easier for you young parsons nowadays. All the old dogmas have gone. You can preach practical Christianity." And there are times when one fears that Mr Maclachlan has fallen into the snare that has been the death of so many pacifists —the illusion that the practice of forgiveness is within the sphere of human capacity and that its widespread adoption spells Utopia. Mr Maclachlan appears to recognize no difference between nature and grace. "You forgive evil," he writes, "when you *deliberately* apply to it goodness" (p. 47). The italics are mine. I have never yet met anyone who has been able *deliberately* to forgive evil, but I have met people who are living in such a dimension as to be incapable of responding to evil with anything but love. It is a pity that so much admirable common sense should be mitigated by this undercurrent of shallow optimism. Our Lord's method of dealing with evil is designated as "intelligent, sensible and effective" (p. 59). If there is no more to it than that, we may safely leave the job of reconstruction to Professor Joad and Gilbert Murray. But despite these

[1] *The Faith of Friendship*, by Lewis Maclachlan. Fellowship of Reconciliation. 2s. 6d.

traces of humanism there are many good things in Mr Maclachlan's book, and it has the merit of being without obvious paternity.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has written a Foreword to *Refugees and Industry*,[1] by C. C. Salway, of the Christian Council for Refugees from Germany and Central Europe. This booklet should help to allay the absurd suspicions of herren-folk-minded patriots, for it provides an admirable array of carefully selected facts revealing the part that refugees are playing in the industrial life of our country.

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# CORRESPONDENCE

## CELIBACY OF THE CLERGY

*To the Editor of* Theology.

Sir,

Will you permit me to make some observations on the interesting Memorandum on "Celibacy of the Clergy" which you print this month?

1. *Vocation.*—It is all-important that the whole question of celibacy and marriage should be seen in this context. For generations the Church has suffered from priests who have drifted into marriage or bachelordom with no motive higher than that of inclination. The question of a vocation to a life which may be quite contrary to our natural inclinations is too seldom faced and men at theological colleges should be urged to face it. In any case, let us extirpate that brood of priests—whom Sir Edwin Hoskyns rightly called "dangerous"—who are "bachelors by inclination."

I would question, however, how far vocations to celibacy, as such, are temporary. It is true, of course, that to accomplish a certain piece of work it may be necessary for a man to remain unmarried for a period of time. But celibacy, surely, consists in something more than merely "not marrying": so much, indeed, the Memorandum suggests. Mr Sherwin Bailey, in his articles in Theology for April and May this year on "Love and Marriage," made out a strong case for regarding marriage as the method ordained by God for the completion and fulfilment of those individuals called to it. Is not the same true of celibacy? I think it is, but I do not think that this completion is a temporary thing any more than the completion in marriage is a temporary thing. A further point is worth making here: a man who receives a vocation to celibacy, and who "marries" in spite of it, cannot hope to receive that grace necessary for his perfecting in the married state.

All this is not to say that the period of testing in, and training for, a life of celibacy in the way outlined in the Memorandum is not valuable and even essential; clearly it is, but warning must be given against

[1] *Refugees and Industry*, by C. C. Salway. Williams and Norgate. 1s.

regarding the vocation, when once conceived, as a sort of "trial marriage."

2. *Vows.*—I am unhappy about the sharp distinction made between secular and religious on this question. If the initial vocation has been rightly comprehended, accepted, and vows taken, then I cannot see that release can rightly be given in either case. The married clergy cannot be released from marriage vows, and I would question whether the celibate clergy can be released from their vows of celibacy. The laying down of this principle, of course, clearly implies that immense care and preparation should be given to the initial conceiving of the vocation.

3. *A Society.*—Such societies, of course, exist. But one must guard against making celibacy their *raison d'être*. Rather, they should be expressions of a certain type of priestly vocation, of which celibacy is only a part. Clearly we must see the whole matter, as St Paul does, in the context of our pastoral office.

Yours faithfully,

HENRY R. T. BRANDRETH.

9, THE WAITS,
ST IVES, HUNTINGDON,
*October* 5, 1942.

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The Rev. R. H. Fuller (Windgate, Bakewell, Derbyshire) calls attention to the fact that those who drew up the memorandum on "Celibacy of the Clergy" omitted to notice a reference to the subject in another of the Anglican formularies—viz., in the Homily against Adultery: "Finally, all such as feel in themselves a sufficiency and ability, through the working of God's Spirit, to lead a sole and continent life, let them praise God for his gift, and seek all means possible to maintain the same; as by reading of holy Scriptures, by godly meditations, by continual prayers, and such other virtuous exercises." Mr Fuller writes further: "It is to be noted that the passages of Scripture (Matt. xix. 12 and 1 Cor. vii. 32 *f.*) and the Anglican documents all refuse to make the ordained ministry exceptional in the matter of celibacy or marriage. All passages recognize a vocation to the married or to the celibate state as a call which comes to laity and clergy alike. Therefore to isolate the clergy in this way is a procedure which is un-Biblical and un-Anglican. The question of clerical celibacy must be considered in the larger context of celibacy in general."

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Archbishop Robert Leighton's *Practical Commentary on the First Epistle of St Peter* (iii. 1) contains this passage: "After men have said all they can, and much, it may be, to little purpose, in running the parallel between these two estates of life, marriage and celibacy, the result will be found, I conceive, all things being truly estimated, very little odds, even in natural respects, in the things themselves, saving only as the particular conditions of persons, and the hand of Divine providence, turn the balance the one way or the other. The writing of satires against either, or panegyrics on the one in prejudice of the other, is but a caprice of men's minds, according to their own humour." Leighton himself was a celibate.

# BOOK REVIEWS

THE GOSPEL AND INDIA'S HERITAGE. By A. J. Appasamy. S.P.C.K. 8s. 6d.

Dr Appasamy is the son of a distinguished Tamil Brahmin convert, who towards the end of his life practised Yoga under a Hindu instructor. He himself collaborated with Streeter in *The Sadhu*. He was given the task by the National Christian Council of India of writing a book for translation into the principal Indian languages, which should "present the Gospel story in a form which would appeal to Indian readers" and should "bring it into relationship with the best traditions of Indian religion."

The people who will read it are Indian clergy and ministers, teachers and professional men, and, it is to be hoped, intelligent Hindus. It should help the Christians, especially those whose training has been in the vernacular, for whom there is very little theological literature on modern lines, and it should induce some Hindus to read the Gospels for themselves. The style is that of an Indian popular lecturer, full of repetition and paraphrase. This makes it tiresome to an English reader, but it is not meant for him.

The standpoint is not that of "biblical realism." The life and teaching of Jesus are presented under such titles as "The Inner Life of Jesus," "His Teaching on God," on the Holy Spirit, Sin, Forgiveness, etc., "The Death and Resurrection of Jesus." At each point parallels are adduced from Hindu scriptures or modern Hindu writings showing "that Jesus realized more than anyone else the ideal of the godly man" as set out (*e.g.*) "by Tukaram," or in some way fulfils the deepest aspirations of the Hindus.

At the end he thus establishes the claim of Jesus to be "the one and only *Avatara*." "In these chapters we have been studying Jesus, His noble teaching, His matchless life, His unparalleled suffering and His wonderful Resurrection. And we have come to the conclusion that He was an Incarnation of God. There is no inherent improbability in God becoming incarnate more than once. . . . But has He actually done so? It is our firm Christian belief that among all the great religious figures in the world there is no one except Jesus who could be regarded as an Incarnation of God. With the Christian the question of calling other religious leaders Incarnations does not seriously arise, for however sympathetically he may study their teaching and revere their lives, he is not drawn to them as he is to Jesus."

The Synoptists are "three masters in the art of biography"; St John "has a rare capacity for meditation" and "understands thoroughly the mind of Jesus." "Jesus, in the Gospel of St John, teaches that our relation to God is the same as the connection of branches with a plant." This is in the section on the Indwelling God, with Hindu parallels, not in the section on the Church.

The saying "This is my body" is elucidated with the help of a long quotation from the *Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishad*, which speaks of the world as the body of God. "He who, dwelling in the earth, yet is other

than the earth, whom the earth does not know, whose body the earth is, who controls the earth from within—He is your soul, the Inner Controller, the Immortal. He who dwelling in the waters . . . in the wind . . . in the eye . . . in the mind . . . in the understanding . . . yet is other than the waters, etc." The world is the body of God as revealing His power and wisdom. A second body is the "fleshly organism of Jesus . . . God took yet another body, the bread and wine which He blessed on the eve of His crucifixion. They were to reveal to men His utter love for them leading to the complete sacrifice of Himself on the Cross . . . God took yet another body—His Church."

Of course all this is dangerous. Appasamy knows that quite well; he has avoided many pitfalls, and has clearly pointed out many places where the teaching of our Lord and some Hindu doctrines cannot be reconciled. To some the method appears to be false altogether. The word of Jesus to the world's religions is "No." Such remarks should be addressed to the N.C.C. of India. With an interdenominational Council behind him and the Hindu world in front, Appasamy could do no other. The Indian Church must risk its own heresies. And it seems to me that the logical consequence of biblical realism is to trust the living Lord to utter His own word in His own way. If the signs of the times mean anything, an apocalyptic situation will quite soon develop in India. The whole scene may change in this generation. Hinduism will have to come to terms with history, and it may then be given to the Church to speak the Word with power, in action and suffering. Appasamy's book may then be superseded by a greater, written in sweat and blood.

T. R. Milford.

Oxford.

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The Christian Interpretation of Sex. By O. Piper. Nisbet. 10s. 6d.

This book is an important and valuable contribution towards the full, rich philosophy of sex of which the world, Christian and non-Christian alike, stands desperately in need. Its greatest value lies in the solid appeal to Holy Scripture, and the sincere determination which the author shows throughout his work to discover the essentially Christian approach to the various aspects of his subject. It is refreshing to find a presentation of the case for the Christian standard in sex morals which takes biblical teaching seriously and, without ignoring cogent and valuable support from psychology and sociology, is based firmly on the revelation of God in Christ. Too much praise can hardly be given for what may be described as the "atmosphere" of the book. Dr Piper has given us a straightforward and objective treatise, devoid of sentimentality, full of sympathy and human understanding, obviously the fruit of patient and discriminating research. The shortcomings of the work are unfortunately likely to obscure its merits in the eyes of some readers. Dr Piper has allowed his antipathy to

traditional Catholic teaching to colour his pages too deeply. There appears to be a lack of any kind of recognition of the Church's authority in faith and morals. There is a hint of polemical Protestantism when we reach the discussion on the relative importance of marriage and celibacy, the place of virginity in the Christian scheme, and the function and value of the religious life. These high matters are worthy of a deeper and more sympathetic study than has been accorded them here. It is this limitation which upsets the balance of the book, and will cause disappointment to many who would otherwise be unreservedly grateful to its author even though they might still find themselves bound to disagree on theological grounds with many of his conclusions.

More detailed criticism would be out of place in a short review, but attention must be drawn to an apparent confusion between homosexuality and homo-erotic behaviour which occurs on p. 143. It may be that an important distinction was preserved in the original and lost in the translation; but the impression left on the mind of the reader of this passage is that the homo-sexual condition is in itself, in some sense, sinful, and not only the anti-moral and anti-social expressions of that condition which are usually described as homo-erotic. Moreover, the juxtaposition of the homo-sexualist with the adulterer and the prostitute, on p. 210, is disastrous, unless Dr Piper wishes us to understand by homo-sexualist one who definitely indulges in homo-erotic practices and not merely one who is possessed of a homo-sexual trend.

In conclusion I feel that our gratitude to Dr Piper and our appreciation for what he has done for us would be all the greater if the real significance of his work could be suggested by a small emendation of the title. "A Christian Interpretation of Sex" would provide the opportunity for a complementary volume by a Catholic moralist in which the relevance and importance of traditional moral theology could be interpreted in the light of the best modern psychological thought, in the language of the present day. If this attempt were made, the work which we have been discussing would be seen in its true significance.

J. H. L. Morrell.

Brighton.

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Good and Evil Spirits: A Study of the Jewish and Christian Doctrine, Its Origin and Development. By Edward Langton. S.P.C.K. 15s.

The subject of this book is the world of præter-nature and its relation to nature and arch-nature; the exploring by man's imagination of everything which is called "the world of spirits," of its and their relation to this world of man, and of the relation to it of man-after-death. I say "imagination" because beliefs are generally made significant to us by images. At bottom, perhaps, beliefs are not so, and in great crises of the heart they are often not so; then we believe abstractly, even if we do not know it, and act without symbols. It is certainly such beliefs and such acts which are required.

Mr Langton presents that præter-nature, that state of things which has been believed to exist alongside, and even throughout, our own; largely, but not wholly nor fundamentally, alien. Death, it is held, releases us into it, though there many of us, it seems likely, will be like some savages in our own world—stupid, morose, fearful. In that sense the difference between most primitive men and most contemporary men (Christians or not) is not great. To read Mr Langton's first eighty pages, which "briefly consider all the main conceptions of the nature and operations of spirit beings which have been found, and which still exist, particularly among the uncultivated peoples of the world," is to be convinced of this. I will take only one example from among the facts and theories which he discusses; he says: "So great and recent an authority as Marett . . . is of opinion that the visionary shapes, such as are seen in dreams and trances, became the typical conception of spirit, to which other aspects of the spirit-belief were conformed." Omit trances, and substitute anæsthesia, day-dreams, or reading, and what else is the case in most moderns?

It is, I think, this sense which is evoked by Mr Langton's book. When he proceeds from the uncivilized to the Jews he in fact traces the effect on man's imagination of developing monotheism. If I follow Mr Langton rightly, he suggests that at first the Hebrews shared with other peoples the idea that the world of the dead was as active as, and wiser than, this. As the devotion to Yahweh intensified, an opposition sprang up which, combined with the Hebrew stress on the community in this life, reduced Sheol to a place of forgetfulness and shadows. "In Sheol there is no remembrance of God, and the dead cannot praise him." It was after this laying waste of the world of the dead (perhaps, in a sense, a greater conquest even than that of Canaan) that that world had to be reoccupied. In it there begin to appear gleams of the glory of Yahweh, and the slow coming of the idea of effective personal immortality. It seems as if, on the whole, this effectiveness was a late idea. The place of shades becomes, for the righteous, an intermediate state only, for beatitude is to follow. "If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there," is the mark of the new awareness that all states of being belong to the Omnipotence. If any lives are to be left as dim shades it must be a deliberate decision; that is, a deliberate judgment on them. It may be that something of this image of vague shadows lingering in a place of feeble life is in the phrase of our Lord, "I never knew you," and in the "perish everlastingly" of the Athanasian Creed.

Mr Langton's last sections are concerned with the Jewish apocalyptic and apocryphal literature and with the New Testament. By now the idea of judgment is dominant; the earthly and heavenly Paradises are defined and distinguished; and the abyss of fire with its living populace of fallen angels is discerned within the faint boundaries of Sheol. The whole conception of immortality and the præter-natural world has been widened and intensified. Man, in his natural life, is to be aware of it, for in that life after death which is his archnatural life he will discover that that is one with—of the same nature with—the præter-natural. This is the truth hidden in the phrase "the restoration

of all things." The Parousia is the appointed time of this; in that sense also "all shall be one"; for the restoration is the perfect reconciliation of everything except that which will not be reconciled.

The whole book is thus a kind of commentary on the great text, "The hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of God, and they that hear shall live." Mr Langton intends to follow this volume by another dealing more intensively with the Bible. It is much to be hoped he will. His care and justice make this, for all but the learned specialist who already knows, a convenient and valuable summary and exposition of the whole subject.

CHARLES WILLIAMS.

OXFORD.

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THE CONFESSION OF AN OCTOGENARIAN. By L. P. Jacks. Allen and Unwin. 15s.

This is a very readable and interesting book. The most vivid portraiture is that of the author's relations, especially his father and mother, and of the struggles of a lower middle-class family in Nottingham at the beginning of the second half of the nineteenth century against ill-health, bankruptcy and incessant toil. This part of the book contains also an excellent picture of church and chapel life. After that there is a valuable sketch of Unitarianism, through L. P. Jacks' struggles after education, study at Manchester New College, London, and ministries at Renshaw Street, Liverpool, and the Church of the Messiah, Birmingham. Dr Jacks seems to have been spiritually awakened by Matthew Arnold's *Literature and Dogma*, to have been most powerfully influenced by Josiah Royce and Charles Eliot Norton in America, and to have made his central discovery of "the Common Man" in Birmingham and in rural surroundings. His later life as Professor for twelve and Principal for sixteen years at Manchester College, Oxford, is more dimly sketched; though there is much to be learned from his restrained account of his failure to carry the governing body with him in his conception of the College, his work in the United States, his all-too-brief account of his editorship of *The Hibbert Journal*, his gentle reflections on Oxford, and his musing on the state of the world.

What Dr Jacks has worked for is "the education of the Whole Man, the revival of elemental religion, and the completing of the Reformation" (p. 211, *cf.* pp. 188, 198). About this it must be said, first, that here are the fruits of the religion of experience. As experience it is, of course, fine and cultured, but it is a poor substitute for the Word of God and the Holy Catholic Church. Secondly, Dr Jacks has always sought catholicity—but it is a catholicity which treats as irrelevant common faith or common order, the clinging to which he puts down to the bondage of habit. Thirdly, there is much truth in the doctrine of the Common Man, provided you accept as your starting-point, as Dr Jacks does not, the need of the Common Man for a Saviour. His outlook is a perfect example of what Niebuhr calls "the easy conscience of modern man." "No cumulation of contradictory evidence seems to

disturb modern man's good opinion of himself." No, it does not. Dr Jacks' view is tragic but untroubled.

Further, one must be allowed to dissent from the idea of completing the Reformation by turning it into something different, and to suggest that while, indeed, the whole man must be educated we need a less anthropocentric view of his nature.

The most important thing this book can do is to promote reflection on the late Victorian turn-away from Bible and Church to the religion of experience. In Dr Jacks' judgment it has promoted elemental religion. In my judgment it has dissipated it. But it is with regret that I dissent from so interesting and gallant a warrior, who, at eighty years of age, appears so blithe.

H. Cunliffe-Jones.

Bradford.

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The Jew in the Christian World. By Hans Kosmala and Robert Smith. S.C.M. Press. 6s.

Viewed from one angle, all Christians are Nonconformist Jews; viewed from another angle, all Jews are Liberal Christians. It all depends on the point of view, and on the colour of the mental spectacles worn by the observer. Particularism and exclusiveness are not confined to Judaism, as this book, for example, makes clear. Neither are ethical monotheism and belief in "progress" the perquisites of Liberal Christianity.

Mr Kosmala is a German of Polish descent and Mr Smith is a missionary of the Church of Scotland, as Dr William Paton informs us in a Foreword to this book. One might have expected some disparity between their respective points of view, but the authors' team work has been excellent. In dealing with the questions, What are the causes of anti-Semitism? and, Has Christianity a message to Judaism? they argue that the belief of the Jews in their exclusive status before God and among mankind was the life-line of Judaism before Christianity appeared, and that the Christian Church is certainly not the author of the Jewish exclusiveness (pp. 64, 66), while "anti-Semitism begins when we refuse to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with our Jewish neighbour" (p. 173). This is a point of view, and there are, of course, other points of view. Less heavily tinted spectacles might have revealed to Mr Smith that the Samaritan schism was not due to "Jewish religious and national separateness" (p. 111), but to the recrudescence of an age-long animosity between the northern and southern kingdoms, which was primarily of a political character, and to the opposition of the older to the newer Yahwism. In likening Ezra's teaching concerning the "holiness of the seed" to the Nazi doctrine of the "holiness of the blood" (p. 39), Mr Kosmala seems to misapprehend both dogmas. Particularism and universalism undoubtedly existed side by side in Israel, but the stress laid on the former in this book does not invalidate the contention of Dr Parkes and others that the beginnings of anti-Semitism are to be traced to the medieval Christian Church, which produced, in turn, a Jewish exclusiveness

unknown before. A certain bias is shown in the singling out of those passages in Rabbinic literature which display a "discriminatory attitude to the Gentiles" and the complete ignoring of the other side of the picture, where we see Jewish and Gentile farmers in partnership (Tosefta, *Peah* ii, 9); poor Gentiles gleaning and participating in the "corner of the field" and the "forgotten sheaf" charities (Mishnah, *Gittin* v, 8); or receiving gifts as "friends" and "neighbours" of Jews (Tosefta, *Ab. Zar.* iii, 14). Deeply tinted spectacles are responsible, again, for the over-emphasis of the part played in medieval Jewish thought by the scurrilous tract *Toldoth Jeshu*, the Jewish "History of Jesus" (pp. 72-74). (Incidentally, the translation made by Schonfield in 1937 is not the "only one in English" (p. 73). A complete translation was made in 1885 by G. W. Foote and J. M. Wheeler, who mention still earlier editions in their Preface.)

The purpose of all this becomes clear in Mr Kosmala's discussion of Noachism (pp. 93-107) and in Mr Smith's question: "Are Jews one day to be welcomed into the membership of a world-wide Christian Church, or are Christians to become adherents of a world-wide Jewish community?" (p. 159) The spectre of Jewish missionary activity under the cloak of the Society of Jews and Christians is more amusing than convincing. Had our authors ever known Israel Abrahams, Claude Montefiore, or Herbert Loewe—none of whom are even mentioned by name—they would scarcely have imputed to *them* such sinister motives.

The sincere desire of Mr Kosmala and Mr Smith to present Christ to the Jews cannot be questioned. But if any collaboration between Jews and Christians in defence of those eternal spiritual values which they both share, if any readiness to learn from one another without compromising anything of their distinctive witness, merely serve the "missionary aim" of Judaism and mean that Christianity "gives up Christ, its Lord" (p. 103), then the alternative would seem to be deadlock or anti-Semitism. Whether the kind of anti-Semitism displayed in this book will serve the ultimate purpose of its authors admits of serious doubt.

C. W. Dugmore.

Tixall.

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The Book of Revelation is History. By H. S. Bellamy. Faber and Faber. 8s. 6d.

There are three assumptions which the reader of this book must make before he can begin to treat it as a serious contribution to the study of the Book of Revelation:

(i) That the Viennese engineer Hoerbiger's Cosmic Ice Theory, and especially his teaching concerning the pre-lunar satellites of our earth, are correct; according to this theory (in its heyday a standing joke, we understand, in certain German circles) a pre-lunar satellite in about 200,000 B.C. or earlier was captured by the earth, approached and eventually disintegrated, with catastrophic consequences for the earth;

(ii) That human civilization in any real sense existed on the earth at the time;

(iii) That there were not just one but several reporters of this capture of the pre-lunar satellite and of its disastrous consequences; their reports were handed down by word of mouth until over 200,000 years later they were discovered by John in a library on the isle of Patmos and translated from an unknown language into Greek; this translation comprises the greater part of our Book of Revelation.

These assumptions swallowed, we can only say that Mr Bellamy most ingeniously forces the text of Revelation to fit this mythological theory. Is, for example, the statement that the picture of one like the Son of Man in 1, 13 *ff.* is "a very happy and extremely graphic description of the satellite and the part it played regarding life on earth" really to be taken seriously in view of the Biblical background? Mr Bellamy's exegesis is always ingenious and sometimes fantastically exciting, but we do not feel that he has in any way substantiated his claim to have "attributed a real, plastic and exciting meaning to the cryptic Book of John."

It is to be very much regretted that the Book Society should see fit to recommend to its supporters a book whose assumptions are so preposterous.

P. DE D. MAY.

CAMBRIDGE.

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THE HISTORY OF THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH. By J. Lebreton and J. Zeiller. Translated by E. C. Messenger. Vol. I. Burns and Oates. 16s.

This is a really fine piece of historical writing where the clarity of the French original survives even in an English translation. Unlike many histories of the Church, it starts with the earliest chapter in that history, namely the life and teaching of our Lord and His apostles, set against the background of the Roman Empire and of the various forms of Judaism found therein. In fact the whole of Vol. I is devoted to the Gospel history and that of the Apostolic age as portrayed in the New Testament, to which it forms an admirable introduction, and can be heartily recommended not only to students of theology at the beginning of their course, but to every intelligent inquirer.

The standpoint is that of the conservative critic. The Gospel of St Luke and the Acts are dated before 63 B.C. The First Gospel is assigned to the Apostle whose name it bears, and all the Johannine writings are attributed to St John, the son of Zebedee. Yet the authors are well abreast of modern criticism, and are generally careful in noting the difficulties raised by it, especially the apparent contradictions between the record of the Acts and the Pauline Epistles, or the differences of standpoint and presentation between the Synoptics and the Fourth Gospel. Such difficulties are dealt with in the text, or more frequently in the admirable footnotes, where the views of radical critics are most fairly presented, even when we are referred to more specialized works for their solution. The authors probably feel, though they do not mention, the heavy hand of the Biblical Commission, yet they do not hesitate to deal frankly with the differences between the Beatitudes as they occur in St Matthew and St Luke. These they boldly attribute to

the divergent forms in which the words of our Lord were handed down in the various catecheses or oral instructions which form the most important sources of the Gospels as we know them. Full justice is also done to the grouping together of sayings or incidents which belong to different occasions, as for instance in St Matthew's record of the Sermon on the Mount. And where there is a difference of chronology between the Synoptists and St John, as in the matter of the Cleansing of the Temple, the account in the Fourth Gospel is definitely preferred. On lesser points, too, the traditional view is questioned—*e.g.*, as to the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which is definitely denied to St Paul, or the identification of James the Lord's brother with James the less, who figures in the list of the Twelve Apostles.

On the other hand there is no explicit reference to the synoptic problem—*i.e.*, no attempt is made to account for the verbal resemblances and differences between the first three Gospels by investigating the sources, whether written or oral, which lie behind them. Nor is there even a footnote in which any allusion is made to the Form Criticism of recent years, which tries to explain the way in which the oral catecheses were formed. Again, while we may admire the defence of the historical character of the Fourth Gospel, it is weakened by treating the discourses in that Gospel as more or less the *ipsissima verba* of our Lord. But nothing could be more frank than the treatment of the divergence between the Acts and the Epistles to the Galatians and Corinthians in connexion with the Council of Jerusalem, or the admission that although the presence of St Peter in Rome can be definitely established, the only fact known about his sojourn there is his martyrdom.

We can look forward with the greatest interest to the appearance of Vol. II, where still greater freedom in the treatment of matters of historical fact may be expected.

H. Edward Symonds, C.R.

Mirfield.

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Poetry in Wartime. Edited by Tambimuttu. Faber and Faber. 6s.

Tambimuttu is the editor of *Poetry* (London), a magazine designed chiefly to print the work of the poets who have succeeded those of the '30's, Mr Auden and Co. The editor's taste, however, is catholic, and he has never attached himself to one school or clique. Most of the contributors to the magazine appear in *Poetry in Wartime*, an anthology of verse written since the beginning of the war but not necessarily on war subjects. The poets of the pre-war generation—Auden, Spender, Michael Roberts, etc.—are represented also.

The title shows that the book is intended to answer the question: Where are the war poets? And in the jingo sense it is obvious that there are none—at least none worth calling poets. The pre-war poets had been saying for long that all was over but the shouting: the war poets know that it is only the shouting which is over. Formula is not enough.

There is in these poems a return to the search for the eternal values, and a new, rather sad, delight in the pleasures of the physical world. It is as if the poets were looking their "last on all things lovely," for

reasons very different from those of Mr de la Mare. Thus Alun Lewis, himself a soldier, after a wet day in camp:

"And I can remember nothing dearer or more to my heart
Than the children I watched in the wood on Saturday
Shaking down burning chestnuts for the school-yard's merry play,"

And Alan Rook, in a lovely poignant poem on the retreat through Belgium, writes:

"Faint now behind the secret eyes of these
The sleepers, the dreamers, the exact and delicate
Flowering of our age, the dusk steals. And over
The trees and rivers, over the golden meadows and vines the glow
Of death is spreading."

David Gascoyne, in his sequence "Miserere," sees the present struggle, and identifies the suffering of nations with that of Christ:

"He is suspended on the cross-tree now
And we are onlookers at the crime,
Callous contemporaries of the slow
Torture of God."

And Anne Ridler writes very movingly of the separations caused by the war:

"I have no words to tell you what you were,
But when you are sad, think, Heaven could give no more."

None of the poems quoted is a "war poem" in the usual sense, but each expresses a state of mind which the war has brought about. Even the poets of the "New Apocalypse," Henry Treece, Vernon Watkins, J. F. Hendry, who frequently use symbols taken from myth and folklore, show the struggle as reflected in their imagination.

There are many more of the fifty poets in this rich and varied collection who deserve mention and who tempt the reviewer to quote, but space allows only to say that the reader will find much that is exciting and much that is moving. To those who may have been puzzled by some modern poetry, let it be said that the verse of these poets is on the whole simpler and more direct than that of their immediate predecessors. There is a genuine lyrical impulse which shows itself in more musical verse, and the poems are more visual and less didactic. In this volume there is hope for poetry, and in the poetry there is hope for humanity.

NORMAN NICHOLSON.

MILLOM.

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CHRISTOCRACY. By J. Middleton Murry. Andrew Dakers. 6s.

Theologically this book is somewhat disappointing and the title is hardly justified, but there are valuable things in the book as a whole. The first eighty pages have little to do with theology, and concern the author's ideas about the causes of the war. I hope these pages will not prevent people reading on to the more valuable second part.

The author commits himself to the economic interpretation of history, and he fails to recognize the absolute importance of relative differences in moral conduct as between nation and nation. He is somewhat inconsistent on both these points. The main theological principle

mentioned in the book comes out in the last pages. It is the contention that only in Christ can man find and hold true individuality in community, and it would have been helpful if, through a more careful handling of the doctrine of the Church, the author had shown how his political and ethical conclusions are deducible from this theological principle.

Yet the book contains some most valuable ethical and political thinking. He points out that parliamentary democracy is not sufficient in itself unless it exists in a tolerant community. Social security is not a sound ideal in itself, since the material side of security could well be supplied by a totalitarian State. Our ability to create and maintain tolerant society, to make peaceful change possible depends on "a conscious renewal of the Christian impulse." This renewal cannot take place unless the Church can criticize the State. In fact, not only is the Church the archetype of all societies within the State, but she depends in the long run on the freedom of voluntary associations. But the freedom of these associations is in danger from secularization. The honourable standards of the medical profession need to be copied in such organizations as joint stock companies.

Now the State must do all in her power to instil a sense of social responsibility into all associations within her border. The State must encourage associations to function in virtual independence of itself. Yet the State must keep the final power in its own hands to prevent anarchy amongst the associations. The author is rightly concerned with escaping the bureaucracy of State capitalism. He urges us to keep away from State idolatry and tolerate only the tolerant, so that peaceful change towards a more co-operative society with a renewed sense of community may be possible. But neither the State's power nor the mental and spiritual inertia of citizens can create this renewed community. We must take care, in our rightful aim to establish social security, that it is obtained in such a way as to release a great fund of spiritual energy. Equality of opportunity in education should be accompanied with a variety of types of school and college. Investment capital will have to be directed as a whole for the good of the community and used for its natural purpose. A renewed sense of the vocation of work is demanded. Some means must be found to distribute the productive power of the machine age. This must be done either by social services for all or some sort of social dividend, though it is not worked out (p. 139). The pursuit of money values for their own sake, if continued, will ruin us, and an immense advance in moral behaviour in communities can alone control the power of the machine which threatens to destroy all freedom. The great problem is that of reconciling what is precious in freedom with the necessity of State power and economic control.

Such are some proposals which the author believes arise out of Christian belief and would tend to help such belief to grow.

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